

April 8, 2008

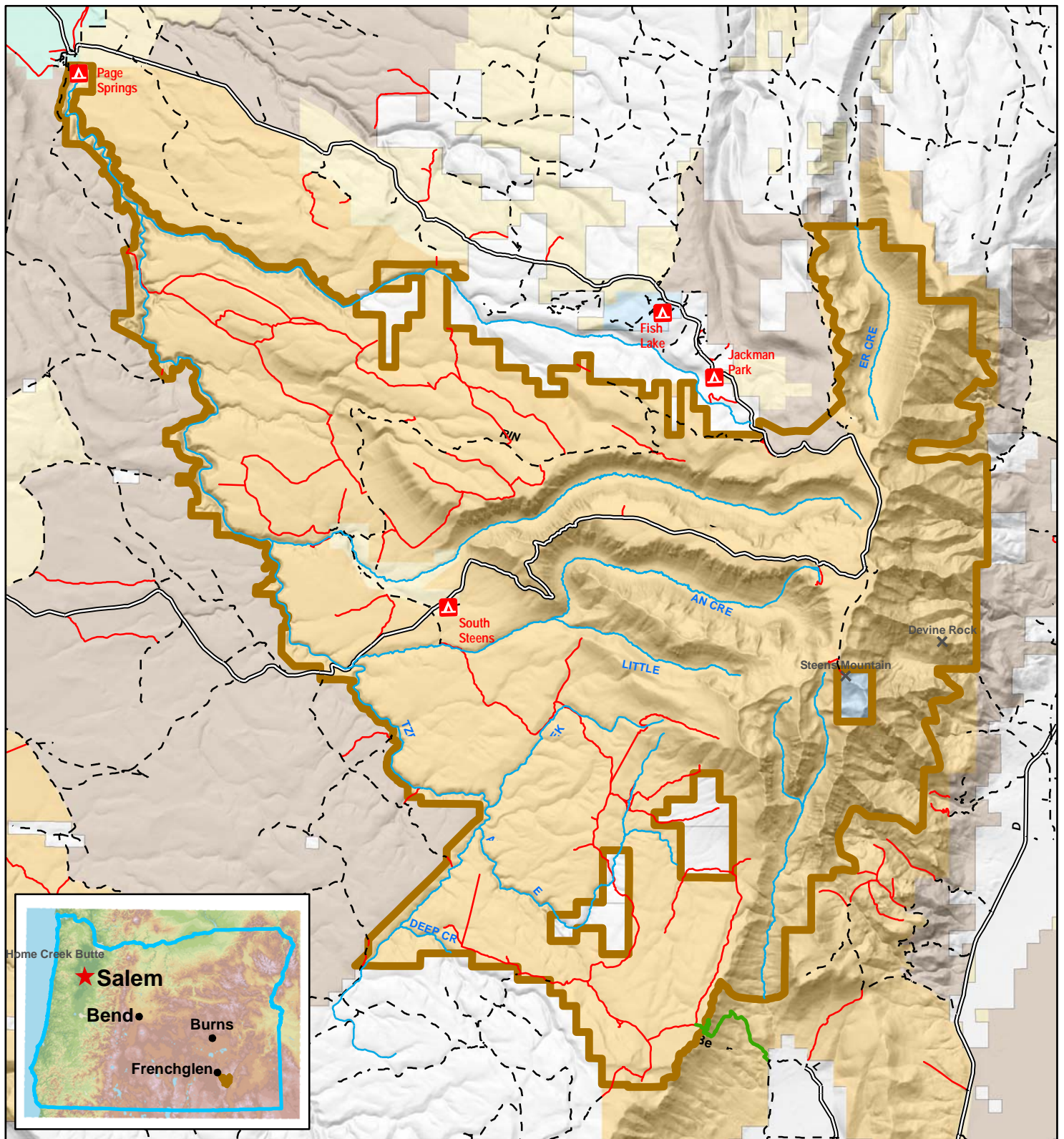
6300 (OR-026)

Dear Interested Party:

The Andrews Resource Area, Burns District, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), needs to address potential landowner requests for access to conduct livestock grazing on private land inholdings within the Steens Mountain Wilderness Area. The BLM has received verbal indication that such requests may be presented to the BLM. The Steens Mountain Wilderness Area was designated as part of the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000 (Steens Act), Pub. L. No. 106-399, 114 Stat. 1655, 16 U.S.C. § 460nnn note. The Steens Act states in section 112(e)(1) that "[t]he Secretary shall provide reasonable access to nonfederally owned lands or interests in land within the boundaries of the Cooperative Management and Protection Area and the Wilderness Area to provide the owner of the land or interest the reasonable use thereof." The Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area Resource Management Plan (2005) states that reasonable access to private inholdings will be assessed in site-specific National Environmental Policy Act documents. The Steens Mountain Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers Management Plan (2005) states that BLM will provide reasonable access to private inholdings while minimizing impacts to wilderness characteristics.

Several parcels of private land may be used for livestock grazing at the discretion of the landowner; these parcels are located in the Ankle Creek Basin, and possibly also in the Fish Creek area. Livestock grazing activities have occurred on these parcels historically and at least through 2004. Since implementation of the No Livestock Grazing Wilderness Area occurred after 2004, and grazing use was discontinued on the surrounding public lands, no known livestock grazing has occurred on these private lands. Harney County has designated these private lands for agricultural use, and/or agricultural uses are not prohibited from occurring on these private lands. Should private landowners desire to make use of their private lands for livestock grazing purposes, BLM must implement the Steens Act provisions concerning reasonable access.

Reasonable access that is provided would be by authorization from the authorized officer or by a Cooperative Management Agreement between BLM and the landowner. Terms and conditions that define routes of travel, days authorized for crossing, and/or other reasonable access restrictions, and alternative analysis will be developed through the Environmental Assessment (EA). The environmental effects of providing reasonable access will be disclosed.



No Livestock Grazing Wilderness (Inholder Access)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| No Livestock Grazing Wilderness | Bureau of Land Management |
| Non-Paved Improved Road | BLM Wilderness Study Area |
| Primitive or Unknown Road Condition | Steens Mountain Wilderness Area |
| Berrington Trail | State |
| Campground | U.S. Fish and Wildlife |
| Closed Road | Private |

Note: No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data was compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification. Ownership boundaries are accurate to within plus or minus 200 feet. Make local inquiry of road conditions in remote areas. Some roads are impassable following severe weather. Roads shown may not be all existing roads. Always seek private landowner permission before using or crossing their lands.



US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Burns District, Oregon
Andrews Resource Area



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Miles

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April 7, 2008 For Karla Bird

I invite you to participate in our scoping process by identifying issues that should be addressed in an EA concerning how access requests will be accommodated. A timely analysis and decision would allow for reasonable access should either or both landowners desire to apply agricultural uses to their private lands during the 2008 grazing season or in years to follow. This scoping letter, and the eventual EA will be posted on our Web site:

<http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/burns/plans/index.php>.

Previous analysis of motorized access into the Ankle Creek Basin that provided reasonable access to the Ankle Creek parcels was published in the EA for Ankle Creek Inholder Access (OR-027-02-011). The decision for this EA was for motorized access only, along the Ankle Creek Route from the South Loop Road, which is not specific to nor suitable for an authorization for livestock movement into this area. Additional analysis was published in the Snowmobile and Berrington Trail Access Analysis (EA OR-05-027-085). A decision on this 2005 EA has not yet been reached.

The scoping period will be from April 8, 2008 through May 5, 2008. An EA is planned to be published following consideration of public scoping comments. Please provide written scoping comments to me at the address above, or you may provide e-mail scoping comments to 'or-ea-access@blm.gov' by May 5, 2008.

Please contact me if you have specific questions concerning this scoping letter.

Sincerely,

/s/ Karla Bird

Karla Bird
Andrews Resource Area Field Manager

1 Enclosure

1 - Map: Reasonable Access to Inholdings within the No Livestock Grazing Area for Livestock Use of Private Land Parcels. 2008